

School Year 2010-11

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Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the DCPS year 1 pilot school scorecard?

Parents need information about schools to make the best decisions for their children; and community members have a right to information that tells them how well public schools are serving our city's students.

To meet these needs, DCPS is developing school scorecards that will provide a comprehensive look at the performance of each school in the system. Scorecards will include information that parents have identified as key in their decision-making about their child's school, including school safety and culture, student achievement and growth, and family involvement in the school. The scorecards will be released annually and made publicly available in print and online.

The underlying philosophy of this scorecard, and one shared by the District of Columbia Public Schools, is that determining an effective school is a much more complicated exercise than looking at test scores or AYP status (Adequate Yearly Progress) in isolation. The school scorecard contains measures derived from both quantitative and qualitative sources and brings these data together to tell the story of a school's effectiveness. Each of the measures on the scorecard works in concert with the rest to deliver an accurate and comprehensive look at a school's performance.

Why create school scorecards?

The primary purpose of the scorecards is to drive student success. For students to succeed, their parents need information to make the best possible decisions for them. Similarly, community members need school performance information to hold each school, and the system as a whole, accountable for serving the needs of our city's children. For all of these stakeholders, that information has to be easily available and understandable.

Who receives the year 1 pilot scorecard?

In the pilot year, school scorecards will be released to schools to ensure that administrators and staff are comfortable with the tool and have the opportunity to provide feedback on the final product. During the pilot year, school administrators are expected to engage their staff and community in conversations about the scorecard. These results will be gathered and incorporated into the inaugural public school scorecards launched in the fall of 2011.

How can you view a year 1 pilot scorecard?

Year 1 pilot scorecards are made available to schools in PDF form as well as through an online interface at www.profiles.dcps.dc.gov. Since year 1 pilot scorecards are only available to schools, they are password protected and only accessible within the DC Gov network.

What are schools expected to do with their year 1 pilot scorecard?

During the year 1 pilot (2010-11 school year), principals are expected to solicit feedback on the scorecard actively from their school community including parents, school staff, Local School Advisory Teams and other community members. Between January 2, 2011 and March 30, 2011, schools are expected to hold at least two meetings – one meeting with school staff and one meeting with the broader school community (i.e. parents, students and other community members). DCPS central office will play a role both in providing materials that will guide those conversations and in modifying the scorecards, as necessary, to ensure that they meet the needs of their stakeholders.

Are these included on the year 1 pilot scorecard and will the year 1 scorecard be used for evaluative purposes?

The Year 1 pilot scorecards and a school's performance on their scorecard will not include an overall rating or grade. There is a placeholder for an overall school rating and for points earned by a school but these values are set to "N/A" for all schools during the year 1 pilot.

Components of the scorecard related to student, teacher, and school performance will continue to be evaluative elements in individual and school performance as outlined in their personnel evaluation processes.

Beyond year 1, how will the scorecards be used?

During the year 1 pilot of the school scorecards, DCPS central office will not only be soliciting the thoughts of school staff and the community on the content of scorecard but also on the internal accountability uses of the scorecard moving forward. For example, future uses could include using the using the scorecard to determine supports and/or interventions to schools from the central office.

Where can I send feedback?

Any feedback that you have on the year 1 pilot scorecards can be submitted through email to dcpsdata.accountability@dc.gov or online at www.profiles.dcps.dc.gov/feedback.

Where did the data on the scorecard come from?

The data that are presented on the scorecard come from a number of different sources.

DC CAS and DC CAS-ALT

Students in grades 3-8 and 10 enrolled in DC Public Schools take an annual state assessment known as the DC CAS (DC Comprehensive Assessment System). A smaller number of students with severe cognitive disabilities take DC CAS-ALT (the District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System – Alternate Assessment). The exam is administered in two core subject areas: math and reading. Science is also administered in grads 5, 8 and 10. The score that a student receives on the exam that s/he takes corresponds to one of four performance levels that tells the story of the level at which the student is performing. Those performance levels are "Basic," "Below Basic," "Proficient," and "Advanced." The

test does not negatively impact students. Test results are not used for report cards or promotion, but they do help teachers and administrators understand what a child knows and where he or she may need additional help. These test scores also provide a standard method for assessing student academic performance.

Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys

During the 2008-2009 school year, District of Columbia Public Schools conducted a survey of students, parents, faculty and staff. Nearly 20,000 DCPS stakeholders confidentially weighed in on topics, including satisfaction levels, facilities, and academics in a survey administered by an independent party. This survey will be administered district-wide during the 2010-11 school year. District of Columbia Public Schools values the thoughts and opinions of our students, parents and educators and these surveys are designed to gather information that can be used to evaluate the progress of our district and forge new paths to success. A number of scales that appear on the year 1 pilot scorecard were derived from student, parent and staff perceptions as told on the stakeholder survey.

DC STARS

DC STARS (District of Columbia Student Tracking and Reporting System) is the web-based student tracking and reporting system for District of Columbia Public Schools. It tracks student information including registration, demographics, grade reporting, student schedules, attendance and diploma management among other things. DC STARS is used by teachers, principals and DCPS Central Office staff to track student information.

Does every school's Year 1 pilot scorecard look the same?

There are two different scorecard templates based on a school's grade configuration – one template for schools that serve grades K-8 and another for schools who serve grades 9-12.

Does every school receive a Year 1 pilot scorecard?

During the Year 1 pilot of the school scorecards, approximately 90% of District of Columbia Public Schools will receive a year 1 pilot scorecard. During the year 1 pilot, District of Columbia Public Schools will work to develop scorecard-like tools for each District of Columbia public school.



Getting Oriented

WHAT IS ON THE SCORECARD AND WHERE?

Front Page – The School Profile

The school profile page is designed to give the user a high-level picture of the school from a photo to information about the programming and facilities at a school. A majority of this descriptive information was reported directly by schools.

This page also gives the user a summary of the school's performance (as told by the scorecard measures on the inside spread) across a set of five categories -- Student Performance, Student Progress, Safe and Effective Schools, Family and Community Engagement and Satisfaction, and Unique School Indicators. A school's performance in each of those categories rolls up to a total score and a corresponding rating.

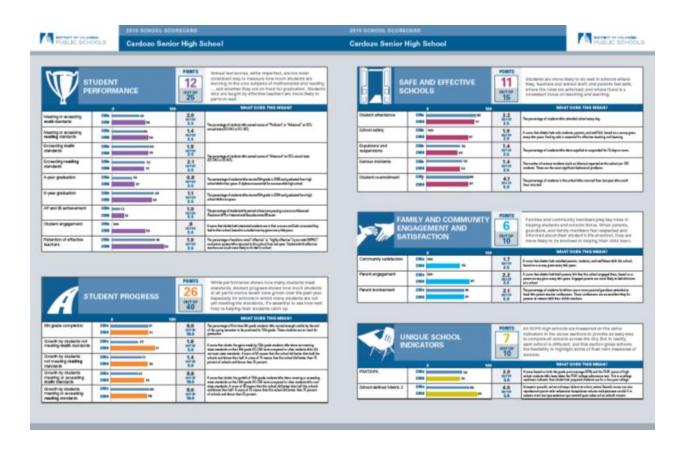
During the year 1 pilot, there is no point or rating system.



Inside Spread – Scorecard Metrics

The inside spread provides a list of metrics and the school's performance against those metrics. The metrics are grouped under five categories – Student Performance, Student Progress, Safe and Effective Schools, Family and Community Engagement and Satisfaction, and Unique School Indicators.

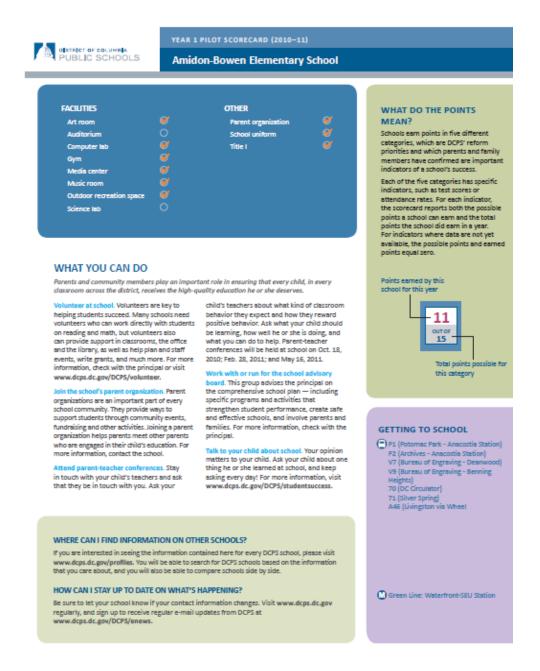
Each metric includes the school's 2009 and 2010 performance to allow the user to establish a trend. It also includes the points that a school earned based on their performance on each metric as well as a description of what each metric represents.



Back Page - Additional Info & Call to Action

The back page of the scorecard includes additional descriptive information about the school like facilities information and metro/bus route information.

Additionally, it contains a brief explanation of how the user should understand the point system and a call to action, offering a number of different ways for different stakeholders to get involved with the school and to learn more about other schools.



Metric Glossary

This section contains the definitions and detailed explanations

FOR EACH MEASURE INCLUDED ON THE SCORECARD.

Student Performance

Annual test scores, while imperfect, are the most consistent way to measure how much students are learning in the core subjects of mathematics and reading and whether students are on track for graduation and career success.

Meeting or exceeding math and reading Standards

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

Each student who takes the DC CAS or DC CAS-ALT exam receives a score that corresponds to one of four performance levels. Those performance levels are "Basic," "Below Basic," "Proficient," and "Advanced." In order for a student to meet DC's state standards, he/she must score at either the "Proficient" or "Advanced" levels and this metric represents the percentage of students at a school who scored at either "Proficient" or "Advanced" on the reading exam and on the math exam. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Exceeding math and reading standards

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

Similar to the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards, this measure is derived from student performance on the DC CAS or the DC CAS-ALT and represents the percentage of students who are scoring beyond "Proficient" at "Advanced." District of Columbia Public Schools has the highest expectations for our students and our schools. This measure demonstrates the percentage of students who are performing at the highest level on their annual assessment. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Median math and reading performance levels

Appears for K-8 schools

This measure is derived from student performance on the DC CAS or the DC CAS-ALT. At each school, each tested student will receive an individual score on the DC CAS or the DC CAS-ALT. If you collected and sorted all of the students' scores from highest to lowest, this measure represents the middle point of all of the scores – the point at which ½ of the students at this school did better and ½ of the students at this school did worse. A school's value on this metric could be at the high, middle or low end of a performance level. For example, a school whose median performance level is at the lower end of "Basic," has a smaller percentage of students performing at the highest level compared to a school whose medial performance level is at the higher end of "Proficient." This measure is designed to give the public an idea about the distribution of scores at a school beyond merely the percentage of students who are above or below the proficiency cut-off. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

4-year graduation rate

Appears for High Schools

The primary goal of District of Public Schools is to provide students with an excellent education so that they will graduate from high school ready for college or career. The four-year graduation rate is a key indicator of DCPS's progress towards that goal. This measure represents the percentage of students who started 9th grade in 2006 and graduated from high school within four years. This metric has a value for school year 2008-09 and will contain a 2009-10 value once the graduation rate is confirmed.

6-year graduation rate

Appears for High Schools

District of Columbia Public Schools recognizes that not all students are the same and some students require additional time and support on the path to graduation. This metric is designed to capture the performance and accomplishment of those students and schools. The six-year graduation rate represents the percentage of students who started 9th grade in 2004 and graduated from high school within six years. Data for this metric will not be available until school year 2013-14.

AP and IB achievement

Appears for High Schools

At DCPS, we have the highest expectations for our students' academic success. This measure demonstrates the achievement of our students who are taking the most rigorous courses in terms of the percentage of students who earned at least one passing score on an Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exam. This performance level demonstrates a strong command of the subject matter and accurately predicts a student's college readiness level. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Student engagement

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

This scale is derived from the independent Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey that the District of Public Schools conducts for students, parents, teachers, principals and other school staff. A school's student engagement score is derived from the survey data and is designed to show, from a student perspective, how interested students are in their courses and how connected they feel to their school, which are two key drivers of student success. This metric is on a 100-point scale and has a value for the year that the survey was administered – 2008-09.

Retention of effective teachers

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

District of Columbia Public schools recognizes the importance of ensuring that talented and committed individuals are serving each one of our students which is why we have developed IMPACT, our system for assessing the performance of teachers and other school-based staff. Through IMPACT, DCPS seeks to create a culture in which teachers have a clear understanding of what defines excellence in their work and as such, teachers are provided with constructive and data-based feedback about their performance and receive support to increase their effectiveness. We want to attract, develop and maintain the most effective group of educators in the country and this measure shows the percentage of teachers who receive our highest ratings of "Effective" and "Highly Effective" last year who remained at the school this year. This metric has a value for school year 2009-10.

Student Progress

While performance shows how many students meet standards, student progress shows how much students at all performance levels have grown over the past year. Especially for schools in which many students are not yet meeting the standards, it's essential to see how well they're helping their students catch up.

Growth by students not meeting math or reading standards

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

This measure tells the story of how well a school does at increasing individual student performance of students who begin the year at either the "Below Basic" or "Basic" levels. Students in a given classroom begin each year at different levels and with different skills than their peers in their class. By the end of the year, each student should have made gains from where they began the year but often those gains are not captured by the story that the percent "Proficient" at a school tells. If a student begins the year at the low "Basic" level and ends the year at a high "Basic" level, that student has made progress relative to where s/he began but that progress will not be represented with a change in proficiency level. The growth score aims to capture that student's relative movement while controlling for their starting score.

This measure is a percentile which means that a score of 50 represents students who began the year at "Below Basic" or "Basic" at this school did better than 50% of the students across DC with similar starting scores and worse than 50% of the students across DC with similar starting scores. A score of 75 means students who began the year at "Below Basic" or "Basic" at this school did better than 75% and worse than 25% of the students across DC with similar starting scores. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Growth by students meeting or exceeding math or reading standards

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

Similar to the above measure, this measure captures the relative growth of students while controlling for their starting score – the difference is in the starting score. For those students who began the year at "Proficient" or "Advanced," how much did those students grow relative to other students across DC with similar starting scores?

This is a percentile measure which means that a score of 50 represents students who began the year at "Proficient" or "Advanced" at this school did better than 50% of the students across DC with similar starting scores and worse than 50% of the students across DC with similar starting scores. A score of 75 means students who began the year at "Below Basic" or "Basic" at this school did better than 75% and worse than 25% of the students across DC with similar starting scores. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

9th grade completion

Appears for High Schools

For many students who enter high school, the transition from the 9th grade to the 10th grade is a difficult one that far too many students do not successfully make. This measure represents the percentage of first-time 9th grade students who earned enough credits by the end of the spring semester to be promoted to 10th grade. Research has confirmed that these students are on track for graduation, college and career success. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Safe and Effective Schools

Students are more likely to do well in schools where they, teachers and school staff, and parents feel safe; where the rules are enforced; and where there is a consistent focus on teaching and learning.

Student attendance

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

Students are more likely to succeed in academics when they attend school consistently. When a student does not consistently attend school, it becomes difficult for the teacher and the class to build their skills and progress. In addition to falling behind in academics, students who are not in school on a regular basis are more likely to get into trouble with the law and cause problems in their communities. The attendance rate tells you the average percentage of students attending school each day in the given year. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

School safety

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

A school's success is critically dependent upon how safe each member of the school's community feels at school. Perceptions of safety are made up of a number of different events from bullying to peer pressure to violence. This scale is derived from the independent Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey that the District of Public Schools conducts for students, parents, teachers, principals and other school staff. The school safety score is comprised of parent, teacher and students responses to questions about school safety. This metric is on a 100-point scale and has a value for the year that the survey was administered – 2008-09.

Expulsions and suspensions

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

Educators understand that teaching social behavior that supports learning requires clear expectations, consistently practiced consequences that respect students and their growth, and a great deal of patience, innovation, and outreach to families. A good student discipline policy reflects clear and high expectations for students. It contains structures and supports to help educators teach students to meet those expectations. It ensures that schools can act quickly and effectively when rules are not followed and expectations are not met. This measure represents the number of suspensions and expulsions at a school per 100 students. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Student re-enrollment

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

This measure looks at all of the students who attended a particular school last year who were eligible to return to that same school this year (e.g. they did not graduate from the school nor did they move from Washington, DC to San Francisco, California) and answers the question – of those students who could return, how many did? Similar to our district and school goal to retain effective teachers, we also want to retain and serve our students. In some cases, this measure can indicate how effectively a school engages with its students and how satisfied students and parents are with the experience they are receiving at school. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Serious incidents

Appears for High Schools

A school's success is critically dependent upon how safe each member of the school's community feels at school. This measure represents the number of serious incidents (such as felonies) that are reported at a school per 100 students. These are the most significant behavioral problems. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Family and Community Engagement and Satisfaction

Families and community members play key roles in helping students and schools thrive. When parents, guardians, and family members feel respected and informed about their student's life at school, they are more likely to be involved in helping their child learn.

Community satisfaction

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

This scale is derived from the independent Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey that the District of Public Schools conducts for students, parents, teachers, principals and other school staff. The community satisfaction score is comprised of parent, teacher and students responses to questions that indicate how satisfied they are with their experience at the school. These include responses to the following questions: "Is your school on the right track for success?" "Are you strongly supported within your school?" "Would you recommend your school to others?" "What grade would you give your school?" "Is this school a welcoming place for your family?" This metric is on a 100-point scale and has a value for the year that the survey was administered – 2008-09.

Parent engagement

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

This scale is derived from the independent Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey that the District of Public Schools conducts for students, parents, teachers, principals and other school staff. The community satisfaction score is comprised of parent/guardian responses to questions that indicate how satisfied they are with the way that their school engages them. These include responses to the following questions: "Does the school keep you regularly informed about your child's progress?" "Rate the level of parent engagement at this school." "Are you made to feel welcome in this school?" "School staff members are helpful in answering your question." "Do you receive interpretations/translations when I need them?" This metric is on a 100-point scale and has a value for the year that the survey was administered – 2008-09.

Parent involvement

Appears for K-8 schools and High Schools

There are many ways in which parent and guardians need to be involved in the education of their children. One of the ways for parents to gain a firm handle on their child's progress in school is through parent-teacher conferences. This measure represents the percentage of parents who attend at least two of the three annual parent-teacher conferences throughout the year. There are no values for this metric; District of Columbia Public Schools will begin collecting this metric across all schools during school year 2010-11.

Unique School Indicators

All DCPS schools are measured on the same indicators in the above sections to provide an easy way to compare all schools across the city. But in reality, each school is different, and this section gives schools the flexibility to highlight some of their own measures of success.

During the Year 1 pilot, scorecards will include only the below two metrics where applicable. In future years, this section will allow principals to feature particular metrics that showcase a school's unique curriculum, achievement or mission.

Algebra 1 Passage Rate

Appears for K-8 schools

This metric represents the percentage of Algebra 1 students who earned a passing grade in their Algebra class which, research confirms, is an indicator of being on track to graduating from high school college and career ready. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

College Readiness

Appears for High Schools

The primary goal of District of Columbia Public Schools is to provide students with an excellent education so that they will graduate from high school ready for college or career. This metric represents the percentage of students who, based on their GPA and their PSAT scores, are eligible for a selective, somewhat selective, or highly selective college. This metric has values for school year 2008-09 and 2009-10.



Technical Appendix

THIS SECTION CONTAINS THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH METRIC.